

JR's crisis management

exercise

— Mervyn de Silva



LANKA

GUARDIAN

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“எங்கள் குழந்தைகளின்
எதிர் காலத்தைக் கருதி,
இனப்பூசல் இல்லாமல்
எழுக நம்நாடு!”
இதுவே நம்
புதுவருட நல்வாழ்த்து.

*Our wish
for the New Year
A country
without racial strife
for
our children's sake*

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* Role of the Church — Tissa Balasuriya, O.M.I.

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INDIAN OCEAN

A small island in the middle of the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka can scarcely afford to be patronising to other 'little' nations. It does seem slightly ironical though that the Maldives whose Sultans brought seasonal "tribute" to Colombo in colonial times, should now offer to bear on its young shoulders an international responsibility that is unarguably Sri Lanka's

If Sri Lanka is totally identified with any major project in international politics and diplomacy it is the Indian Ocean Peace Zone proposal. And for obvious reasons.

From Lusaka (the Third NAM summit) to New York (the UN General Assembly sessions in 1970) and Singapore (the Commonwealth Conference in 1971) it was Sri Lanka which spearheaded the campaign to establish 'a Zone of Peace' in the Indian Ocean. While its practical implementation does pose many difficulties, the UN resolution to hold a conference in Colombo has produced an obstructionist rear-guard action by the US-led western bloc which has effectively thwarted the nonaligned group. An equally fierce campaign by the same bloc failed in the case of the Law of the Sea Convention. The treaty however remains a piece of paper thanks to the dogged resistance of US multi-nationals and the US government.

Postponed several times, the Indian Ocean conference was expected to be convened in Colombo next year. But doubts have been raised once more.

Now Maldives wants to take the initiative. Foreign Minister Jameel described his country's attitude as one of "frustration and disappointment."

MOSLEM REVIVALISM

The signs of a re-activation of Moslem politics which the L. G. noted in its last issue became more strongly evident with the re-emergence of Moslem world's "Three Grand Old Men"

— Sir Razik Fareed, Dr. Kaleel and Dr. Badiuddin Mahmud.

Traditionally, the business of the Sri Lankan Moslems, has been business. Politics has been left to the Elders, with each community (Moor or Malay) loyal to its own chosen leader. Party politics disturbed the old pattern somewhat when the SLFP broke a UNP monopoly with the advent of the Islamic Socialist Front.

The educated young Moslem was an exception for educational pursuits never had the attraction of business prospects. Patriarchal politics and a family patronage system dominated the Moslem way of life.

Arab / OPEC power, the Islamic renaissance, the romantic dynamism of the gadfly Gaddafi and the revolutionary upsurge of the Iranian people and a clergy-led popular movement appeared to change the thinking of some young Moslems but this radicalisation has not resulted in the emergence of any young Moslem political figure.

Suddenly the explosive ethnic (Sinhala/Tamil) issue has shattered the silence of the cloistered world of Moslem politics. Education, jobs, land and economic interests are all at stake. Once more the 'Godfathers' bestir themselves. Sir Razik writes letters of protest; Dr. Kaleel returns from Saudi Arabia to complain of anti-Moslem propaganda and even Dr. Mahmud comes out of the Gampola woods.

Most noteworthy perhaps is the demand made by Mr. Jabir Cader, 2nd MP for Colombo Central in his speech in Parliament last week. Moslems constitute only 3% of university entrants, Mr. Cader said, before arguing that 8 to 10% of admissions should be on an ethnic basis.

GANDHI 2

Every "Godfather" has "Godfather 2". Likewise "JAWS". How about Attenborough's Award-winning "Gandhi"?

(Continued on page 4)

**TRENDS
+
LETTERS**

Ethnic Quotas

Having read the document "Sri Lanka's Ethnic Problems: Myths and Realities" in your issue of 1.11.83, it seems to me that there is no reason for the Tamils to oppose the introduction of ethnic quotas when they have so little to lose and so much to gain from it. In fact, the Tamils should welcome and support the Sinhalese clamour for ethnic quotas and allow the Sinhalese to stew in their own juice, so to speak! And the Government should hasten to introduce the principle of ethnic quotas in the fields of education and employment as it could then settle the raging controversy in this major area of ethnic hostility, with one stroke of the pen.

(Continued on page 2)

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(Continued from page 1)

Like every other community, the Indian Tamils too should receive their separate ethnic quota. It would not be fair, nor would it be in their interests to lump them together with the Sri Lanka Tamils.

Irrespective of the community that is found to suffer discrimination on the basis of racial percentages, such discrimination should be gradually removed by introducing the principle of ethnic quotas regardless of any consequent loss of undue advantage currently enjoyed by one or the other communities.

It would only right a wrong.

W. S. M. Fernando

Colombo 6.

Reply to CRD

Please permit me a short reply to the CRD.

Re cheating at examinations the examples I gave were many and wide-ranging. The CRD implies that these do not amount to more than individual acts by lecturers "of either community" (sic) favouring "friends or ethnic community" and quotes the Keuneman Report as saying that "such large scale manipulation is not possible". I am content to leave this issue to your readers to judge for themselves.

Re the IATR tragedy the CRD having written "The police fired. Eight people died" with the clear implication that they died of gunshot injuries and not accidental electrocution, go on to assert that what the police (who are the accused in this charge) have to say cannot be "the crucial and decisive factor". No one said it was. But I submit that they cannot be found against without being heard. The CRD appears to be saying that the magisterial inquest was not "full and fair and independent". The CRD is silent on what the Sansoni Commission has to say about this unofficial "Commission".

Boyd Almeida

Dematagoda

COVER PICTURE

THE COVER PICTURE is taken from one of three designs used for the New Year cards produced by the Centre for Communication and Development in furtherance of its programme of inter-ethnic communication. All three designs are drawings by partially sighted children at the School for the Blind, Ratmalana. The children's drawings were used in order to underline the message which appears inside in three languages — Sinhala, Tamil and English and reads:

**Our wish for the New Year:
A country without racial strife —
for our children's sake?**

The cards are sold in packs of six at Rs. 25/- per pack and are available at Book Shops and Stationers and from the Office of the Centre for Communication and Development 380/85, Baudhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 7. Proceeds from the sales of the cards will go to the School for the Blind.

The Centre for Communication and Development (CCD) intends that these cards should help to introduce its Project of promoting a non-racist awareness among children and juveniles which it hopes to launch in early 1984. The project envisages the production of children's books, plays, short films and other creative and educative material in Sinhala and Tamil to break down prejudices and create understanding between children and young people of different ethnic groups. The programme is at present being planned with the co-operation of several writers and artists in various fields.

The Centre for Communication and Development was inaugurated at the beginning of this year and is a non-sectarian and non-profit making organisation. The fundamental objective, as stated in its Articles, is as follows:

The primary purpose of the Centre shall be to promote, both nationally and internationally, the democratising of communication, and to help guarantee that the communication process, while protecting and preserving fundamental human values, will be used as a liberating force.

The other objectives include the following:

(a) to promote the study and research of the structures and processes of communication particularly from the point of view of their consequences for democracy and social change;

(b) to investigate how local mass media systems are linked to systems of international control and to promote their disengagement from linkages that are clearly injurious to the development of democratic communication;

(c) to promote the democratisation of communication, both nationally and internationally, through the encouragement of the widest possible participation in ownership management and production;

(d) to counteract the promotion of communal and interreligious antagonisms through the media and to foster a positive understanding of the cultures and ways of life of different ethnic and religious groups through the use of mass media and other forms of communication;

(e) to watch closely over, and protect against infringement or curtailment, of the people's right to communicate;

(f) to monitor the impact of the communication revolution on development and on the culture and consciousness of the people, and to alert the community and the authorities to the need to take corrective measures against any undesirable or destructive consequences thereof;

(g) to harness for democratising communication religious motivations and values which remain potent agencies for social change in the multi-religious society of Sri Lanka;

(h) to support all low-cost and democratic forms of communication that provide alternatives to the media monopolies and to encourage thereby plurality and dissent as a necessary component of democracy;

(i) to research, uncover, develop and help harness for development, indigenous and traditional forms of communication based in rural areas;

(j) to monitor the development and impact of television and all video communication particularly with reference to its implications for national development strategies and culture;

(k) to develop among the broadest possible range of the viewing public a capacity for responding to television and video programmes in a discriminating way so that the individual and his culture are not overpowered by the media;

(l) to provide communication support consultancy for development programmes launched by non-governmental organisations;

(m) to promote all the aforesaid aims and objectives through seminars, workshops, research, audio and video productions and publications, and all other forms of democratic persuasion which are appropriate.

The Governing Council of the C.C.D. consists of Messrs V. L. Wirasinha (Chairman), Reggie Siriwardena (Vice-Chairman), Godfrey Gunatileke, Mervyn de Silva, and Professor K. Indrapala.

J. R. ON THE HIGH WIRE

Mervyn de Silva

NEWS
BACKGROUND

What we are witnessing right now is the first real Sri Lankan exercise in crisis-management. It is a far more important exercise than the post-1977 insurrection essay in restoration and recovery, and certainly more difficult and delicate. An external factor (India's role) and other foreign policy considerations have created special complications of a kind that no administration in the past has faced.

The crisis-manager of course is President J.R. But he is also the chief agent of the operation, playing the dual roles of diplomat and politician.

Diplomacy began in Colombo (Mr. Narasimha Rao's visit and more crucially the visits of Mr. Parthasarathi) and ended in Delhi, with the President in a face-to-face summit encounter without advisers and aides. That diplomacy closed a major debate on one critical issue, although there are still influential Sri Lankans who refuse to acknowledge that fact — the hard fact of India's role. The nature of the role and its actual limits may still be controversial questions but the acceptance, however tacit and tactfully low-key, of the plain, unalterable fact that India cannot be excluded from the general effort at reaching a negotiated settlement is now a reality which can no longer be concealed.

This development, in turn, may provoke new debates or animate old controversies about Sri Lankan sovereignty (effective or formal) and Indian 'involvement'/'intervention' and so on. What is abundantly clear however is that geo-political actualities (the physical proximity of India and the strategic implications of the Palk Straits, the presence of persons of Indian origin and undecided citizenship, the Jaffna/Madras axis and the Madras/Delhi inter-connection) have gained ascendancy over the time-honoured, if sometimes abstract, principles of international law, inter-state relations and diplomatic decorum. The first

task of crisis-management is to get the Sri Lankan constituency (UNP, opposition parties, opinion-makers and the Sinhala majority) to grasp the nettle.

"We cannot keep India away from this problem because India is concerned about the people of Indian origin... We should also realise India is a powerful country and we cannot fight with them... of course if they invade, we won't give in. How then can they conquer us...?", Mr. Jayewardene told the UNP conference.

The second task may be described as friendly persuasion of organised political opinion or diplomatic salesmanship — selling the Delhi package. The main items in the package are known though there is some doubt on, and various interpretations of, certain details. The blurred area covers both substantive matters (e.g. the powers of the proposed regional councils) as well as modalities (e.g. referenda).

Maintaining a cracking pace in order to retain both the initiative and the momentum post-Delhi, he briefed the opposition leader, Mr. Anura Bandaranaike the day after his return. He has also held discussions with the LSSP, CP and TC leaders and sounded them on both the items in the Delhi package and the modalities. This is essentially a consultation process — well-publicised for obvious reasons — aimed at building a broad (Sinhala, UNP-Opposition) consensus before the eventual confrontation with the TULF.

Finally, he has taken full command of his own party and brought it in line with the basic needs of his crisis-management exercise by silencing, isolating or winning over the militants, forcing some (at least, publicly) into moderation, and giving the fence-sitters a kick in the pants. Meanwhile, he has had informal talks and made contacts with representative influentials and poten-

tial dissidents outside the formal Political Establishment.

As things stand, two problems can be envisaged, and these, quite naturally, are inter-dependant. First issues/modalities. A whole crop of questions can be identified. What will be the powers of the proposed councils and will these include law enforcement, land alienation and distribution of settlers-colonists (See UNP CONFERENCE, and Mr. Mathew's statement) economic projects? What will be the geographic limits of the councils and the right of amalgamation? Should the TULF (or FP) be invited straightaway to the all-party conference or should this be preceded by a consensus decision? What of the JVP and NSSP? Should the settlement, if and when it is reached, receive popular endorsement and if so, what is the precise procedural form? A national referendum?

In order to 'manage' the crisis, the exercise has so far been confined to the Political Establishment. This part of the operation has been handled with unusual skill and care. But does it mean 'managing the manageable'? What of the "silent majority"? Did the six Buddhist prelates speak for that constituency? They are opposed to "poorna bala thala" (unlimited powers for the councils) and any expansion of the present DDC's.

The President is on the high wire — a daring, delicate and risky enterprise. If he takes a tumble, the chances of a negotiated settlement and the possibilities of "peace in our time" could be eliminated forever because only he seems to have the strength and the authority to 'manage' this crisis. Delhi obviously appreciates this. It is giving him all the help he needs by maintaining a silence that is only too eloquent.

U. N. P. CONFERENCE AND MR MATHEW'S STATEMENT

Mr. Cyril Mathew, the Minister of Industries, has been known throughout his parliamentary career as the most committed, consistent and uncompromising champion of the Sinhala cause. Mr. K. W. Devanayagam, Minister of Home Affairs is the most senior Tamil UNP front-bencher.

Mr. Mathew proposed and Mr. Devanayagam seconded the main resolution at the UNP's annual conference. The resolution (full text on this page) stresses the fact that the UNP has always recognised "the rights and privileges of all citizens regardless of racial or

Protect unitary state UNP followers told

— By Upali de Silva

A RESOLUTION calling upon all UNP branches, youth leagues, Women's associations, trade unions and students unions to protect the unitary character of Sri Lanka will be among several resolutions to be presented at the party's annual sessions at the Sugathadasa Indoor Stadium next Saturday.

President J. R. Jayewardene, leader of the UNP, will chair the conference.

The text of the resolution reads: "The UNP, which was founded on September 6, 1946, on the broad-based principles of eschewing communal and religious differences, has ruled Sri Lanka for 20 out of the 35 years since independence.

"The constant principle of our party has been to avoid thinking in terms of race, religion or caste and give equal rights and privileges to every citizen. This party has never abandoned these principles even while being in the opposition in parliament. Therefore we express our regret about the loss of property, destruction of national and private property, loss of employment and breakdown in the government's development program."

"We request all party branches, youth and women's leagues, trade unions and students' unions to take strong steps towards building a united nation and peace and prosperity."

— C. D. N. 6. 12. 83

religious differences". It also regrets the "recent communal clashes", and calls for an "effective campaign" to "promote and foster communal and religious harmony".

The choice of proposer and seconder could not have been accidental. As such, the decisions of the party conference was a clear political triumph for President Jayewardene and for the "communal harmony" line strongly advocated since August by President J. R. and Premier Premadasa.

This is not to say that all the top UNP'ers who addressed the conference spoke with one voice. Indeed, the UNP leadership will probably agree with such an observation and offer it as proof of the party's democratic character.

According to the ISLAND, Mr. Mathew, who accused the international press of trying to paint him as "communal-minded", stated that TULF was "not a political party" but a communal organisation which supported terrorism. His solution to the ethnic problem was to settle people everywhere according to a proportional representation system. "Sri Lankan history was a Sinhala history and nothing else" he said.

The seconder of the resolution, Mr. Devanayagam reminded his fellow party members that talking of history is of little use, reported the SUNDAY OBSERVER. The need was to help the President in whom the minorities had the fullest confidence, and not to place obstacles in his way.

Transport Minister M.H.Mohammed the ranking Moslem UNP'er said he was 100% against communalism, and 100% against terrorism. Neither of these "isms" should be afforded a place in a united Sri Lanka.

Both Lands Minister Gamini Dissanayake and Finance Minister

Ronnie de Mel emphasised the economic factor. Unity and peace, Mr. Dissanayake remarked were "vital for development". Mr. de Mel made the point even more strongly. Another eruption would affect the flow of aid, warned the Finance Minister.

"Strengthen the President's hand". This was Prime Minister Premadasa's slogan and there's little doubt that this congruence of views on the vexed ethnic issue has greatly helped the UNP to restore the image of party unity, at least at the top. This was not so evident when Parliament debated matters in August when feelings were still running high. At that time it almost looked as if the advocates of the "communal harmony" line were a besieged minority. Like the Holy Roman Empire which was neither 'holy' nor 'Roman' nor 'an empire', it may have been said of the UNP that it didn't appear to be either "united" or truly "national".

Gandhi...

(Continued from page 1)

Actually there are other Gandhis. There's Indira Gandhi who recently sprang to the defence of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan when a beleaguered Zia regime locked up this poor old man. Mahatma Gandhi's friend is better known as the 'Frontier Gandhi'.

When Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne launched his much publicised "Long March" (neo-Gandhianism's answer to Mao Zedong Thought) an enthusiastic band of local movie-buffs had the bright idea of exploiting the Kennedy revival and producing a video-cassette titled "The New Frontier Gandhi". But that'll have to wait till after White Christmas.

Where have all the 600 gone?

"Justice can never be administered in an environment of fear and intimidation" said Mr. Justice Sharvananda, acting C.J., in his address to the annual conference of the Judicial Service Association.

The explosive tensions generated by the ethnic issue could be identified as the main cause of the July violence and carnage. As 'Black July' recedes however, a wider perspective emerges. What were the environmental conditions which made such a complete breakdown of law and order, and indeed of the normal restraints of a civilised society possible? It was President Jayewardene himself who measured the true dimensions of the July "collapse" and called those days of near-anarchy 'a crisis of civilisation'.

Though its language is tempered and the tone properly judicial,

Justice Sharvananda's speech was remarkably forthright. But his is not the first spiritedly critical voice to be raised recently. For out of the chaos and the monstrous ugliness of July has come paradoxically a renewed self-confidence among the liberal intelligentsia — individuals and groups within the judiciary, the academic community, the professions, the press, the public service etc. May be these are minorities but they inter-act and the process of inter-action reinforces the independence and moral courage of each person and group.

The paradox is this: the evident breakdown of the institutional structures of law and law-enforcement has been paralleled by a (perhaps temporary) collapse of that regimen of "fear and intimidation" installed by the same forces that were

responsible for the steady erosion of the law-and-order foundations. The organised goon squads, the bicycle-chain brigades and the private 'mafias' which assaulted students, stabbed strikers, broke up peaceful public meetings etc seem to have vanished like the 600 "demonstrators" about whom Justice Sharvananda spoke.

The Acting C J said: "It is depressing that though the so-called demonstration took place at 11 a. m. in the heart of Colombo, the police should have reported that not one of the 600 demonstrators could be identified nor the buses which carried the demonstrators traced".

Where is the Light Brigade? Where have all the 600 gone? While those questions will probably remain unanswered, another

(Continued on page 21)

Krisp, Fresh...

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TEAM

FRESHNESS AND FLAVOUR GOODNESS OF

Communal tensions and the role of the Church

Tissa Balasuriya, O. M. I.

LET ME mention first, some of the hypotheses concerning the July conflagration in Sri Lanka. These are hypotheses, and hence not conclusions; they need further investigation.

A) Hypotheses concerning July riots

The first point of view is that this is mainly

1) **A communal problem** in which the ethnic tensions and rivalries were heightened by the demand for a separate state of Eelam and the resort to violence and counter violence by both sides. The escalating spiral of violence led to the July explosion of accumulated frustrations on both sides. Within this there are problems of (a) language, (b) education, (c) employment, (d) land distribution.

These are four major areas of dispute concerning which the Sinhala and Tamil peoples have different perceptions and different demands. In the resultant tension there is the problem of (e) 'security' (i) of the armed forces and of the police from attacks by the militant youths, (ii) and the **security** of the people of the North and East from the excesses of these forces of law and order. All these relate to the question of the **Devolution of power** and of the relationship of the North and the East to the Central Government and the rest of the country. The delay in finding a satisfactory political solution to these issues aggravated the conflict. Due to the killing of their personnel in the North, the police and the armed forces were more than remiss in maintaining law and order during that week of mass violence.

A Talk to the Presbyterium (Assembly of Priests) of the Archdiocese of Colombo given on 15th November 1983 by Fr. Tissa Balasuriya, Director, Centre for Society & Religion.

One view is that these are the main issues and that the causes of the July conflagration can be met by dealing with them; or at least these issues must be taken separately by themselves without complicating their resolution by bringing in other problems into the picture.

2) **A leftist conspiracy** is a second point of view. It is contended that given the ethnic tensions, the Left parties: the JVP, the NSSP and the CP conspired to embarrass, if not overthrow, the Government through these disturbances. The Government put forward this view: that these left parties had a plan, as was indicated by the pattern and spread of the violence. They wanted to upset and destabilize the Government because the economic policies of the Government were very successful. The plan had three stages: first a Sinhala-Tamil riot secondly Sinhala-Muslim clash and thirdly Buddhist-Christian conflict. With that the Government would find it impossible to continue. These parties could not achieve power through the people's votes, as shown by the Presidential elections, the Referendum and the by-elections of May 1983. They were trying to achieve through violence what they could not realize by democratic means. Some of the groups that failed in the insurrection of 1971 were attempting violence once again. The success of the open economy prevented a breakdown of the supplies of essential goods, and prevented food riots which were hoped for by the conspirators.

This was the point of view put forward by the Government. These parties were therefore proscribed. Some of their leaders are in detention (without trial still) some are in hiding or have disappeared. The C. P. detainees have been released without charges being made against

them. Investigations concerning this conspiracy are continuing.

3) A right wing plan

A third view, put forward by these three parties and some others, is that the Government policies were not succeeding in economic life, in the political field and in controlling Northern young militants through the armed forces. Given the ethnic tensions, the Government or pro-Government groups were interested in provoking a little trouble. This would enable the Tamil economic power in the South to be destroyed and teach the Tamils everywhere a lesson that others too could resort to violence. The Government could thus stabilize its authoritarian power and divert popular attention from socio-economic difficulties.

This charge has been made in Parliament and in the statements of several political parties. They give some reasons indicating the Governments complicity, such as the way news was censored and announced on the 24th and 25th July. The killing of the 13 Sinhala soldiers on the 23rd night was published in full with their names, but the retaliatory killing of about 40 Tamil persons in the North by the armed forces was not announced till several weeks later. The killing of 52 political prisoners in the Colombo jails on two occasions is also adduced in favour of this view. The behaviour of the police and defence forces in the last week is said to be partly due to such a plan.

A charge here is that persons who attempted the coup in 1962 have now found their way to places of power and influence and are now trying to carry through a right wing take over of power. Unfortunately, for them, it is said, the violence went beyond what the country could tolerate.

4) **A break-down at the level of the whole social system**, and not only of race relations.

A fourth view is that the July rioting was due to a deep discontent among many people with the entire political, economic and social system. The ethnic factors provided the occasion and the direction in which this discontent could express itself. The argument is that there was a combination of the above three factors with an accent on the overall relations among societal groups in the North as well as the South.

It is contended that the policies followed by successive governments and specially since 1977 have not led to a suitable and satisfactory type of development. This has resulted in a loss of confidence in the **political system**. There has been a devaluing of Parliament with the MPs no longer capable of having a major influence on policy. Dismissal is the price of any dissent by them vis-a-vis their Party leader who is also the head of the Executive and President of the Republic. Their undated letters of resignation are in his possession. The Presidential Elections and the Referendum of last year left room for a great deal of discontent among all the Opposition political parties and a fair section of the population. The concentration of power in the hands of the President, and the problem of the succession cause considerable tensions even within Governing party. The entire political framework leaves little scope for change in policy or personnel by democratic processes during the rest of this decade.

On the **economic side**, it is said, that the economy has not been growing satisfactorily during the past two years or so. There is recession in some sectors. Even where there has been significant growth, many others have been affected badly by some of the policies of the open economy. Continuing inflation, the ever rising cost of living, the steady devaluation of the currency, the relatively low increase in incomes of many is causing hardship to many families. The burden of debt servicing has been increasing; foreign

investments do not seem to benefit the country much in the long term, and the cost of foreign aid is rising. The economy did not have the buoyancy of four or five years ago. The only way out seemed to be the trek to the Middle-East, which some consider "a 20th century version of the slave trade." The problems of the urban poor were far from settled. The open economy and the consequential consumerism and its demonstration effect specially through the T. V., made for a greater sense of deprivation among them. The assault on the environment and the prolonged droughts had also a serious impact on the economy, specially on the plantation sector which has been its mainstay. The oil bill is ever mounting and consumes very much of our export earnings.

The open economy was said to be in severe crisis and could hardly be maintained without serious losses. But it could hardly be changed in its essentials without the government being discredited.

Along with these there were **socially undesirable** features: as the increasing inequality, the spreading corruption, the social tensions of the migration of hundreds of thousands of middle aged men and women, the employment of young women while young men had fewer employment opportunities, the spread of the use of drugs, gambling, the undesirable influence of many TV programmes, the break-up of families, prostitution — female and male —, the recourse to abortion, the spread of venereal disease. All these were causing deep social tensions. But they were being sent under the carpet or not given much attention in public policy, as the guiding motive force was the maximization of profit under the reigning philosophy of the open economy and free enterprise capitalism.

The undermining of social values were related to a grave weakening of the moral conscience of individuals and of the people as a whole. There were many contradictory phenomena that eroded the people's confidence in the moral stance of the political leaders. The forces of law and order were often neutral in the face of mob violence; police

officers who were condemned by the courts of law for violation of human rights were promoted overnight on orders of the Executive. There seemed to be a widespread conviction that there was a scandalous gap between the publicized word of the political leaders who preached morality and their actions. The "Dharmishta" policies of this Government were as much open to disbelief and even quiet ridicule as were the "socialist" policies of the previous Government.

This hypotheses would propose that all these factors combined, along with the ethnic quarrels. At this time, they coalesced and produced the avalanche of July. The fabric burst, specially as the police and defence forces were demoralized and not interested in defending the Tamil people even in the South due to the continued violence against them by Tamil militants in the North. In so far as there is truth in this approach our problems will not cease with a solution of the ethnic conflicts, because of other underlying societal causes of the troubles. It may be that the ethnic issues themselves tend to evade solution because of these other complications.

5) A fifth aspect of **foreign interests** has to be added to all these hypotheses. There are claims of interference by the interested foreign groups e.g. the C.I.A. and the U.S. led Western alliance; the Socialist powers and their strategies and the special "concern" of India, along with the particular link of Tamil Nadu. The Superpower conflict in the Indian Ocean attracts attention to Sri Lanka specially due to the Trincomalee harbour.

These factors are all intertwined and it may be that over these few years, the ethnic chauvinists, the extremists of the Left and of the Right wings, the peddlars of vice, the seekers for unconscionable profits, those who resort to one or other form of violence, the myths and prejudices so widespread in society all contributed to the collapse of our apparently civilized way of living. A deeper study is required for any conclusions on these, or even for finding their inter-relation and the priorities among these factors.

B. A traumatic experience

I would like now to share with you some reflections on the situation that has arisen as a consequence of the sad events of July 1983. For all of us in Sri Lanka, and for Sri Lankans everywhere, this has been a most traumatic experience, as was mentioned in the prayer this morning. Last evening a very senior gentleman who has held important public offices and is now a top executive in a private business establishment told me that he is profoundly shocked by this experience. One morning he woke up to discover that we were savages. We saw mobs of people going about killing other people in a frenzied mood of collective madness.

I want to deal this morning with the issue as it touches us Sinhala people, because here we are in the Sinhala area. In general it is more difficult, and yet more wholesome, to deal with the problem as it faces us. Much of what I say is, however, also relevant to the Tamils, the Moors, Malays and Burghers.

As far as Tamil people are concerned, while being conscious of their just grievances. I have been saying already from 1977 that there is no likelihood and no scope for a separate State in Sri Lanka. I have written in our Logos book on Race Relations on the "The Cost of Separatism" and "The Price of Separatism". The talk of separatism, I wrote in 1977, is itself a very dangerous and explosive thing. This issue could easily lead to Sri Lanka being involved in international power conflicts specially with reference to superiority in the Indian Ocean. In the first week of August this year I wrote to all the Tamil MPs of the T. U. L. F. requesting them to restate their views in favour of a united Sri Lanka and against violence. That has been my position. I am saying this as a preface to what I say here. One does not want to approve of what is wrong and undesirable in any group — whether it be the demand for a separate State which I think is not feasible and is a costly process even in the asking, or violence as it cannot be the solution to our problems. The majority too should

not think that the power of numbers or the might of arms can satisfactorily resolve the problems of the rights of a people with a historical consciousness of their dignity and identity and a sense of destiny in their future.

The Sinhala people are themselves going through a very difficult experience in their lives. We thought of ourselves as good, kindly, affectionate, forbearing, patient people. This is even more traumatic for all of us believers in religion, whatever be the religion, because our religions teach a noble message of love and kindness. But suddenly we see a violent human explosion; we see men killing others on the street, men, women, children who are considered Tamils are murdered in cold blood. Some are hunted down because they are considered "Tigers". Houses are set on fire; furniture and vehicles burnt; looting on a massive scale. Youths, schoolboys with knives, sticks and other makeshift weapons ruled for a week on the streets of several cities. The taste of blood and loot seemed to elate the jubilant mob. The forces of law and order turned the other side. The accredited leaders of society were silent for days.

We have been shocked as to what is our nature? our identity? What is our Sri Lankan identity? As Sri Lankans we are shocked, ashamed and terribly, almost irremediably divided. As Sinhala people also we are shaken to our foundations. Our moral bases seem shattered.

There is a problem of the Sinhala people themselves needing liberation though they be the majority in an independent country. Certain basic fears, worries and anxieties trouble the Sinhala people. We are worried about being a minority in the whole region, about the danger of the division of the country, and about external interference. We have our own internal divisions according to political ideo-

(Continued on page 24)

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C. R. D. on Land settlement and ethnic tensions

1. *Why has Land settlement become an important issue in the inter ethnic rivalry?*

What we are talking about here is state-sited and state funded colonisation schemes that had become a key component of the agricultural policy of various governments. These are projects funded by the state and implemented as

a part of state policy. Tamil people claim that these schemes, especially in the East, have in the past changed the ethnic composition in the areas where they have a majority.

2. *What are the apparent confusions in discussing the question of Land settlement?*

In discussing the question of land settlement and changes in the

population composition of a particular area we must not confuse these processes with the general migration of people within the country from one area to another. This migration takes place due to a variety of factors. As it is related to socio-economic changes in the country, no conclusions regarding general migration can be reached without specific studies being carried out. One can get a general idea of this migration on an ethnic basis by looking at the changes in the population distribution within each district over several years. We have looked at the population figures for 1946, 1953, 1963, 1971 and 1981, and following are the districts where there have been significant changes in the distribution of the population on an ethnic basis. (We have taken more than 5% change in the proportion of any ethnic group to be significant). (See Table A)

3. *What do these figures show?*

These figures show that the most significant change in the ethnic composition of districts has been the drop in the proportion of the Indian Tamil population in some districts between 1971 and 1981. This is the direct result of the implementation of the Sirima-Shastri pact. It is accompanied by an increase in the proportion of the Sinhala population in the relevant districts. Nuwara Eliya being an exception where there is an increase in the Sri Lankan Tamil population. Vavuniya is another exception where the proportion of Indian Tamil population has increased at the expense of the Sri Lankan Tamils. Finally Trincomalee and Anuradhapura are two districts where there has been a drop in the proportion of the Sri Lankan Tamils with an increase of the Sinhalese, and in the Colombo district the reverse has taken place.

Table A

	1946	1953	1963	1971	1981
Colombo S %	81.0	80.5	82.5	83.2	77.8
CT	4.1	5.3	6.0	6.3	9.8
Kandy S	57.8	58.0	59.8	62.2	75.0
IT	29.2	30.5	28.2	24.5	9.3
Matale S	68.1	69.1	72.3	74.1	79.9
IT	21.9	20.2	17.3	15.3	6.8
N'Eliya CT	2.0	2.2	2.5	4.7	13.5
IT	57.3	59.2	56.8	51.7	47.3
Vavuniya CT	69.3	67.1	63.5	61.6	56.8
IT	4.2	6.7	11.5	14.8	19.4
Trincomalee S	20.7	18.2	28.8	28.8	33.6
CT	40.1	40.6	36.9	35.2	33.8
A'pura S	79.7	83.3	89.5	90.1	91.3
CT	6.7	6.0	2.5	2.2	1.2
Badulla S	57.3	57.1	55.2	58.7	68.5
IT	34.2	35.6	37.8	33.5	21.1
Ratnapura S	75.7	75.6	77.8	79.5	84.6
IT	20.6	20.7	19.2	17.0	11.1
Kegalle IT	13.0	12.4	11.4	9.6	6.4
Mannar M	33.1	30.2	28.7	26.8	26.6

4. *How about the other districts?*

In most other districts the ethnic composition has remained static. But there the districts whose boundaries were changed and therefore comparison of the figures for different years becomes more complicated. By the time of the 1963 census a new district of Amparai was carved out from the Batticaloa district. We give below the corresponding figures to show the change that took place:

1953 Batticaloa District	S	11.5
	CT	47.5
	IT	0.7
	M	42.2
	O	
1963 Batticaloa District	S	3.4
	CT	71.1
	IT	0.8
	M	23.7
	O	
Amparai District	S	29.3
	CT	23.2
	IT	0.6
	M	46.5
	O	

5. *Is there any truth in the Tamil claim about the changes in ethnic composition due to colonisation schemes?*

This claim is based on the figures that we have just mentioned for Batticaloa and Trincomalee districts, where there had been an increase in the proportion of the Sinhalese. More research has to be done before any conclusions can be drawn regarding the extent to which these changes are the result of colonisation schemes. But one has to accept the fact that the changes have given rise to fears among the Tamils. The relationship between the two communities is such that it is not realistic to expect the Tamil people to believe that governments headed by political parties backed by the Sinhala people, and therefore constantly under pressure from this majority, will be impartial when it comes to land distribution.

6. *Why do Tamils object so strongly to the alteration of the ethnic composition in the North & East?*

Because any such alteration would change voting patterns and the

balance of political power in a given district.

7. *How has the problem been aggravated recently?*

Recently this problem has been aggravated for two reasons. First there is a campaign in some sections of the press that there is an influx of Indian Tamil people into the districts of Mannar, Vavuniya, Mullaitivu. Secondly there have been large scale encroachments on the left bank of Maduru Oya, in the Batticaloa district. The majority, if not all of these encroachers, are Sinhalese. This shows that we will face this question very seriously in the forthcoming settlements under the Mahaweli. Therefore a rational solution to this problem is necessary.

8. *Why is there an influx of Indian Tamils into Vavuniya etc. Is it because the Separatists want to enlarge the territory with a majority Tamil population?*

The Tamil influx into these areas is due to a variety of factors. The stratification of the plantation sector resulted in the estate not being as secure a source of employment as it was before, especially as it had become an arena for political patronage. Nationalisation was accomplished by uprooting of estate workers from certain estates. During the food crisis of 1973/74, some of them suffered very badly. This has been chronicled in both local and international newspapers. In addition, the communal riots in 1958, 1977, 1981 and 1983, made many Indian Tamils fear for their physical security in Sinhalese areas. Finally one has to note that estates are not able to give adequate employment to these Indian Tamil population. As a result of all these factors, they moved northward toward the more Tamil-dominated districts.

9. *But aren't these Tamil settlements infiltrated by Tamil terrorists?*

One cannot claim that certain individuals in these settlements did not have links with underground political movements. However, the non-governmental agencies were meeting an urgent refugee need and often had the encouragement

of the state. In fact in the initial stages these organisations helped the refugees meet their subsistence needs without draining the state of important financial resources. This becomes clear when we look at the problem of the urban refugee who is today in a state aided refugee camp. The recent ethnic crisis has heightened sensitivity to the role of NGOs. Yet, no one has formulated a rational and equitable plan which will meet the needs of these Indian Tamil refugees and settlers in the above districts. It is an enormous human problem which the nation must face squarely and with compassion. We must also be careful not to tar with the terrorist brush every social service organisation which helps Indian Tamils. While it is conceivable that individuals in these social service organisations may have sympathies with underground movements, it is also necessary to be circumspect. Mr. Tim Moore, a member of Parliament of the Australian centre-right Liberal party of Malcolm Fraser recently wrote a report for the ICJ on the Human Rights situation in Sri Lanka. Mr. Moore is no admirer of terrorist movements and in his report he roundly condemns political violence in the North. Yet, he writes that he "discussed the operations of the (Gandhyam) movement with a wide range of people in Sri Lanka and come to the conclusion that it is not involved in politics or with Tigers but is a genuine social service organisation. The Sinhalese suspicions with respect to its resettlement activities appear to arise more from increases in Tamil populations close to Sinhalese settlements than from any legitimate grievances about its activities". (ICJ (1983).

10. *Why shouldn't the Sinhalese settle in the Eastern Province — what, for example, is wrong with the Maduru Oya settlements.*

Individual citizens should have the right, protected by our constitution to settle any where in the country. However **state-aided colonisation** and colonisation using **state funds of state agencies** pose a fundamentally different set of

(Continued on page 17)

ETHNIC STATISTICS

STATISTICS are the new bullets in the propaganda war on the ethnic front. Whether they be persons propagandising for separation, limited autonomy, or maintenance of the present unitary state, statistics have often been selectively used.

In a world of half truth, myths abound — that Tamils did not exist in early Sri Lanka (which goes against epigraphic evidence) or that there are traditional homelands for the Tamils which coincide with

the present Northern and Eastern boundaries (such boundaries can be traced to successive administrative arrangements of colonising powers) or for that matter the myth that the Sinhalese and Tamils are biologically distinct "races" (forgetting the historical fact that the Western coast had streams of migrants in the last few centuries from South India who "became" Sinhalese and that Jaffna had at least a partial Sinhalese speaking population which "became"

Tamil in the last few centuries as documented by thombuwas, place names, names of lands etc.

The statistical tables which we begin publishing in this issue provide some of the basic data on access to land (both irrigated and unirrigated and therefore potentially irrigable; to housing to health, to education and to employment. These are the key facts on which some of the current propaganda war is being carried out. But first

Population in Sri Lanka in 1981 March by Ethnic Groups and Zones

Ethnic Group	Zone 1		Zone 2		Zone 3		Zone 4		Zone 5		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
Sinhalese	4,410,370	92.11	2,002,316	82.18	130,136	7.66	4,149,244	77.69	293,600	50.12	10,985,666	73.98
Sri Lankan Tamil	100,161	2.09	131,097	5.38	1,280,888	75.38	229,179	4.29	130,210	22.23	1,871,535	12.60
Moor	159,996	3.24	278,418	11.43	206,358	12.14	289,069	5.41	123,131	21.02	1,056,972	7.12
Indian Tamil	74,607	1.56	14,836	0.61	74,066	4.36	650,585	12.18	11,139	1.90	825,233	5.56
Malay	15,254	0.32	5,991	0.25	901	0.05	7,437	0.14	13,795	2.35	43,378	0.29
Burgher	19,902	0.42	1,567	0.06	4,016	0.24	5,114	0.10	7,637	1.30	28,236	0.19
Others	7,745	0.16	2,325	0.10	2,792	0.16	9,855	0.18	6,264	1.07	28,981	0.20
Total	4,788,035	100.00	2,436,550	100.00	1,699,157	100.00	5,340,483	100.00	585,776	100.00	14,850,001	100.00

Source : Census of Population and Housing, Sri Lanka — 1981
Department of Census and Statistics.

Percentage distribution of Population in Northern and Eastern Provinces by ethnicity and district

Ethnicity	Total Population		Sinhalese	Tamils				Moors	Others
	'000	%		Total Tamils	Sri Lankan Tamils	Indian Tamils			
			%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Northen Province	1,112	100.0	3.0	92.1	86.3	5.7	4.7	0.2	
Jaffna	831	100.0	0.6	97.7	95.3	2.4	1.7	0.1	
Mannar	107	100.0	8.1	63.8	50.6	13.2	26.6	1.5	
Vavuniya	96	100.0	16.6	76.3	56.9	19.4	6.9	0.3	
Mulativu	77	100.0	5.1	89.9	76.0	13.9	4.9	0.2	
Eastern Province	977	100.0	24.9	42.1	40.9	1.2	32.3	0.7	
Trincomalee	257	100.0	33.6	36.4	33.8	2.6	29.0	1.0	
Batticaloa	331	100.0	3.2	72.0	70.8	1.2	24.0	0.8	
Amparai	389	100.0	37.7	20.5	20.1	0.4	41.5	0.3	

Source : 'Census of Population and Housing Sri Lanka — 1981' Department of Census and Statistics.

population figures, ethnic groups and zones.

Any cursory examination of all the relevant data could indicate that injustices do not necessarily divide on ethnic lines. Class and non-ethnic regional configurations are more important. The marginal farmers in Kilinochchi and in Hambantota have more in common than their respective landlords from Jaffna and Hambantota. The Sinhala slum dweller has more in common with the "lines" dwellers

in the estates. And the Tamil politicoes who own large hotels have more in common with their parallels among the Sinhalese (and have gone into partnership with them). Or on the other hand Madras Big Business which back separatists have similarities with the better known Western Multinationals who may be backing both separatists as well as those who stand for a Unitary State.

Further statistics will follow.

Population in Sri Lanka by Ethnic group in 1981 March

Ethnicity	Population	
	No.	%
Sinhala	10,985,666	73.98
Tamils	1,871,535	12.60
Moors	1,056,972	7.12
Indians	825,233	5.56
Malays	43,378	0.29
Burghers	38,236	0.26
Others	28,981	0.20
Total	14,850,001	

Source: 'Census of Population and Housing Sri Lanka — 1981' Department of Census and Statistics.

Population of Northern and Eastern Province by Ethnic Groups

Ethnicity	All Ethnic Group %	Sinhalese %	Tamils				Moors %	Others %
			Total Tamils %	Sri Lankan Tamils %	Indian Tamils %			
Northern Province	7.48	0.30	37.94	51.28	7.69	1.30	2.23	
Jaffna	5.60	0.04	30.12	42.33	2.42	2.69	0.45	
Mannar	0.72	0.08	2.53	2.89	1.71	0.63	1.44	
Vavuniya	0.65	0.14	2.71	2.91	2.25	0.36	0.23	
Mulativu	0.52	0.04	2.58	3.15	1.30	4.98	0.11	
Eastern Province	6.58	2.22	15.26	21.34	1.46	29.82	5.85	
Trincomalee	1.73	0.79	3.47	4.63	0.82	7.04	2.29	
Batticaloa	2.23	0.10	8.82	12.52	0.47	7.50	2.46	
Amparai	2.62	1.33	2.96	4.18	0.17	15.28	1.09	
	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)
Sri Lanka	14,850,001	10,985,666	2,696,768	1,871,535	825,233	1,056,972	110,595	

Source: 'Census of Population and Housing, Sri Lanka — 1981'
Department of Census and Statistics.

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF ETHNIC GROUPS IN THE CENSUS YEAR

ETHNIC GROUPS	1881	1891	1901	1911	1923	1931	1946	1953	1963	1971
All Ethnic Groups	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
1. Sinhalese	66.9	67.9	65.7	66.1	67.0	65.3	69.4	69.3	70.9	72.0
Low Country	—	—	40.9	41.8	42.8	41.7	43.6	42.8	42.2	42.8
Kandyan	—	—	24.8	24.3	24.2	53.6	25.8	26.5	28.7	29.2
2. Tamils	24.9	24.0	26.6	25.8	24.9	26.6	22.7	23.0	22.8	20.5
Sri Lanka	—	—	—	12.9	11.5	11.2	11.0	11.0	11.1	11.2
Indian	—	—	—	12.9	13.4	15.4	11.7	12.0	11.7	9.3
3. Moors	6.7	6.6	5.4	6.5	6.4	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.5	6.7
Sri Lanka	—	—	—	5.7	5.7	5.4	5.6	5.7	6.0	6.5
Indian	—	—	—	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.2
4. Burghers & Eurasians	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.4
5. Malays	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
6. Veddhas	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	—	—
7. Europeans	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	—	—
8. Others	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.8

Source: Census of Population 1971 Sri Lanka.
General Report — Dept. of Census & Statistics.
(P. 80)

CHINA : AN UNPARALLELED ACHIEVEMENT

FOREIGN
NEWS

T. N. Ninan

FOR THOSE labouring under conventional notions about the development patterns of India and China, the **World Bank's** recently released three-volume compendium *China : Socialist Economic development* is an eye-opener. In more than 1,200 pages of often unknown facts and always fascinating information, the Bank's multi-disciplinary team of experts has, after more than a month of touring China, laid bare the achievements and failures of a complex and repeatedly misunderstood country.

What comes through most clearly is an amazing and probably unsurpassed record of economic growth and social progress. Whether one sees the performance in terms of pure growth rates, or in terms of improving literacy, nutrition and population control, or yet again in terms of sweeping structural changes in the economy, the success is as impressive as the canvas is vast. The report is frequently dotted with comparative references to India, and almost without exception the comparisons are humbling.

China's per capita income has been growing at twice the rate in India (between 2 and 2.5 per cent, against 1 per cent in India), and industrial growth has averaged 13 per cent annually, one of the highest in the world and far above India's 5 per cent. With only 8 per cent of the world's arable land, it has fed 22 per cent of the world's population, without any signs of extreme deprivation. The agricultural growth rate has in fact been no more than India's, at 2.3 per cent, but an equal distribution of food has ensured an absence of the kind of malnutrition evident in the Indian countryside.

Remarkable Success

The record of achievements in other sectors is equally, if not

more, impressive. Back in the 1960s, China had an annual population growth rate of 3 per cent — more than India's 2.2 per cent. But by 1979 this had been brought down with unprecedented rapidity to 1.2 per cent, while India's population continued to grow at the old rate. While India's birth rate inched down marginally from 38 per 1,000 population to 35, China's dropped from around the same level to 18. The World Bank report notes quietly that this is a world record.

In this and other sectors, the record is consistently above the average for developing countries with comparable income levels or in similar stages of development. Take education, where China has a primary school enrolment of 93 per cent, against India's 64 per cent. Moving up to secondary school, China's enrolment is 51 per cent, compared to India's 28 per cent. The drop-out rate in the first four years of schooling is no more than 28 per cent — less than half India's 59 per cent. And most impressive of all, primary enrolment for girls is 84 per cent, against just 50 per cent for India. Adult literacy, not surprisingly, is as high as 66 per cent, almost double the 36 per cent in India.

Social indicators like these place China right out of the general category of Third World countries. Major Third World killers like diarrhoea and child mortality have been virtually eliminated, while an equitable food distribution has ensured that though per capita food availability has shown virtually no increase since the 1950s, there is no acute malnutrition. The result: an unusually high life expectancy of 64 years, against 51 in India.

Living Standards

These figures are surprising for the quality of achievement they indicate. Chinese statistics are often

unreliable, and have in the past been subject to major revisions. In fact, some of the figures in the World Bank report appear mutually contradictory. But there is little doubt that the Chinese authorities, getting ready to borrow from the World Bank, have laid bare their country to outside experts for the first time. Otherwise, a report with such depth and range of information would have been impossible.

The real surprise is in the figures that tell of income equality, especially in rural China. For a variety of reasons, there appears to be as much inequality there as in rural India. The poorest 40 per cent of China's rural people get only 20.1 per cent of total income, almost exactly the same as India's 20.2 per cent. And the top 10 per cent get 22.8 per cent, not significantly lower than the 27.6 per cent in India.

In the urban areas, however, the picture is quite different. The poorest 40 per cent in China get a phenomenal 30 per cent of total income, almost twice the 16.9 per cent in India. And the top 10 per cent get only 15.8 per cent, against 34.1 per cent in India.

Comfortable Existence

But the figures do not tell the full story, and are therefore somewhat misleading. To start with, the poor in China are ensured their minimum needs at reasonable prices, and a fairly effective social security system appears to take care of those who can't earn their own livelihood. Equally important, there is no evidence of wide income disparities existing side by side in the same community: the income disparities are regional, and caused by poor land availability or other natural factors in the poorer parts of the country.

The World Bank report sums it up by saying: "A large minority of the population is very poor. These people, however, have a much higher standard of living than those at similar income levels elsewhere. They all have work; their food supply is guaranteed; most of their children are at school; and the great majority have access to basic health care..... Life expectancy..... is on average in China outstandingly high." In fact, China's sweeping structural changes in the countryside — starting with land redistribution, the rapid building up of a new often illiterate but nevertheless effective peasant leadership, and then progressive towards cooperative and later collective farming — stand out in sharp contrast to India's farcical efforts at land reforms.

Amazing Record

THE SOCIAL transformation is matched by the structural change in the economy. For, in a truly outstanding achievement, China has managed to reach a phenomenal level of industrialisation where manufacturing now accounts for fully half of gross national product. This is almost twice the level in India (27 per cent), which itself is no mean achievement by Third World standards. Once again, this tends to place China in the same league as many middle-income countries. Also, despite its low per capita income (estimated at 25 to 50 per cent more than India's), that country has been able to invest 31 per cent of its gross domestic product for further growth, higher than the 25 per cent average for middle-income countries.

More than half the total investment has been made in industry, and 80 per cent of that in heavy industry — thus accounting for among the four consistently highest industrial growth rates in the world in the last three decades. China is now the world's largest producer of cotton yarn and fabric, the second largest manufacturer of radios, the third largest producer of coal and cement, the fifth largest manufacturer of steel and the seventh largest generator of electricity.

What makes this record even more amazing is that it has been

achieved with one of the lowest rates of urbanisation in the world: 13 per cent of Chinese live in cities and towns, against 22 per cent in India. In fact, the percentage of urban population to the total has not changed since 1953, achieving one of the country's goals — Industrialisation without urbanisation — achieved largely through restrictions on migration.

In short, it has achieved handsomely what the World Bank report starts out with saying were China's two main goals: eliminating the worst aspects of poverty and building a heavy industrial base.

Industrial Inefficiency

The environment in which this was done has, however, left its mark on the current situation. Isolated internationally after the break with the Soviet Union in 1960, China now has an industrial sector that often uses outdated and inefficient machinery and technology that is wasteful in its use of energy as well as other inputs. There has been little improvement in either labour or other yardsticks of productivity, so that increases in output have been achieved essentially by a greater supply of inputs. The capital-output ratio is therefore much higher than what it should be, and much of small industry is in existence not because of its efficiency but because of the stress on local self-sufficiency.

Clearly, changing this and other negative aspects of the system will involve major challenges to policy-makers. Many have already been attempted, including greater linkages between individual effort and reward, ending some of the price distortions in the system, decentralising some of the decision-making process in order to make it less rigid, and in giving greater priority to improving consumption levels so as to improve living standards. These could well prove hazardous: greater freedom to producers in taking pricing decisions could easily lead to inflation, for instance. And the World Bank recommends hastening slowly.

Human Price

The Bank's report could also be criticised for underplaying the

heavy human price that has often been paid for getting to the commanding heights of national performance. It mentions casually that two million technically educated and one million university-educated people went out during the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution; and recent reports have spoken of female infanticide being a rampant phenomenon because of the pressure on families to have only one child (which most parents prefer to be male). Also, in anything other than a totalitarian state it would be impossible to implement the kind of rationing that prevails in China, where couples are allocated their turn in a commune to have children.

The periods of political turmoil — like the decade-long Cultural Revolution — often cost millions of lives, while other experiment like the Great Leap Forward caused economic chaos. Yet others such as the effort to break up the family, had to be quickly given up. Human suffering in all of these must have been enormous, and must be laid directly at the door of China's political system.

Nevertheless, it is the same political system that has made possible the close integration of the "well-organised multi-level" economic and social system with the political structure of the country, so that basic social services are delivered, directives quickly transmitted to the field level, and mass campaigns launched to reach social and economic goals.

Clearly, numerous challenges now lie ahead of China: basic need to improve living standards, to modernise laggard sectors of the economy, to tackle the severe housing shortage, to combat a coming energy crunch when the oil surpluses run out, to graduate towards a more open economy that can improve on export performance, and much more. But if the figures are to be believed and the human cost ignored, the World Bank report leaves little room for doubt that China's performance through three decades of social and economic progress — given the scale of effort and the magnitude of achievement is without parallel anywhere.

— "India Today" (30. 11. 83)

Marx and History : Fruitful and unfruitful emphases

EXCLUSIVE

Immanuel Wallerstein

As a general rule, most analysts (and particularly Marxist analysts) tend to emphasize the more dubious historiographical ideas of Marx, and in the process they tend to neglect what were his most original and fruitful ideas. It's perhaps what one should expect, but it isn't very helpful.

To each his Marx, they say, and this is no doubt true. In fact, I'd add to each his two Marxes, as the debates of the last 30 years concerning the young Marx, the epistemological break, etc., are there to remind us. My two Marxes are not chronologically successive. They grow out of what seems to me a fundamental internal contradiction in Marx's epistemology, which results in two different historiographies.

On the one hand, Marx is the supreme rebel against bourgeois liberal thought, with its anthropology centered on the concept of human nature, its Kantian categorical imperatives, its belief in the slow but inevitable improvement in the human condition, its preoccupation with the individual in search of liberty. Against this whole set of concepts, Marx suggested the existence of multiple social realities, each with its different structure, located in distinct worlds, each world being defined by its mode of production. The point was to uncover the way these modes of production functioned behind their ideological screens. It followed that a belief in "universal laws" precisely kept one from recognizing the particularities of each mode of produc-

tion, of discovering the secrets of its functioning, and thus of examining clearly the paths of history.

On the other hand, Marx accepted universalism insofar as he accepted the idea of an inevitable historical march towards progress, with its linear anthropology. His modes of production seemed to be lined up, like schoolboys — height, that is, according to the degree of development of the forces of production. (This is in fact the source of the acute embarrassment caused by the concept of the Asiatic mode of production, which seemed to play the role of a rambunctious schoolboy who refused to follow the rules and line up properly.)

This second Marx is obviously far more acceptable to liberals, and it is with this Marx they have been prepared to come to terms, both intellectually and politically. The other Marx is far more bothersome. The liberals fear and reject that Marx; indeed they deny him intellectual legitimacy. Devil or hero, the first Marx is the only one who seems to me interesting and who still has something to say to us today.

What is at stake in this distinction between the two Marxes is the different expectations of capitalist development which one derives from the opposing historical myths. We can construct our story of capitalism around one of two protagonists: the triumphant bourgeois, or the impoverished masses. Which of these two is the key figure of the five centuries of the history of the capitalist world-economy? How shall we assess the epoch of historical capitalism? As globally positive because it leads, dialectically, to its negation and its *Aufhebung*? Or as globally negative because it brings about the immiserization of

the large majority of the world's population?

Marx was of course a man of the Enlightenment, a Smithian, a Jacobin, a Saint-Simonian. He said so himself. He was deeply imbued with the doctrines of bourgeois liberalism, as were all good left intellectuals of the nineteenth century. That is, he shared with all his associates the sort of permanent, almost instinctive protest against anything that smelled of the *Ancien Regime* — privilege, monopoly, seigniorial rights, idleness, piety, superstition. In opposition to this world whose day was done, Marx, was in favour of whatever was rational, serious, scientific, productive. Hard work was virtue.

Even to the extent that Marx had some reserves about this new ideology (and he didn't have too many), he found it tactically useful to assert an allegiance to those values, and then use them politically against the liberals, hanging them by their own petard. For it wasn't very difficult for him to show that the liberals cast off their own principles whenever order was threatened in their states. It was thus an easy ploy for Marx to hold the liberals to their word, to push the logic of liberalism to its end point, and thus to make the liberals swallow the medicine they were prescribing for everyone else. It could be argued that one of Marx's prime slogans was more liberty, more equality, more fraternity.

No doubt from time to time he was tempted to make a leap of imagination into an anti-Saint-Simonian future. But he quite evidently hesitated to go very far in this direction, fearing perhaps that he would add grist to the mill of utopian and anarchist

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voluntarism which he had always found distasteful and indeed pernicious. It is precisely that Marx, Marx the bourgeois liberal, whose views we should approach with much skepticism.

It is instead the other Marx, the Marx who saw history as complex and sinuous, the Marx who stressed the analysis of the specificity of different historical systems, the Marx who was thus the critic of capitalism as an historical system, whom we ought to bring back to front stage. What did that Marx find when taking a close look at the historical process of capitalism? He found not only the class **struggle**, which was after all the phenomenon of "all hitherto existing society", but also class **polarization**. That was his most radical and most daring hypothesis, and thereupon the hypothesis that has been the most vigorously denounced.

In the beginning, Marxist parties and thinkers brandished this concept which, because it was so catastrophist, seemed to ensure the future. But, since at least 1945, anti-Marxist intellectuals found it relatively easy to demonstrate that, far from being immiserized, industrial workers in Western countries were living far better than their grandparents and that, consequently, there had been no immiserization, even relative, not to speak of absolute.

Furthermore, they were right. And none knew this better than the industrial workers themselves, who were the prime social base of left parties in industrial countries. This being so, Marxist parties and thinkers began to beat a retreat on this theme. Perhaps it wasn't a rout, but at least they became hesitant to broach the subject. Bit by bit, the references to polarization and immiserization (just as to the withering away of the state) diminished radically or disappeared, refuted so it seemed by history itself.

Thus occurred a sort of unplanned and disorderly dropping of one of the most perspicacious insights our Marx had had, for Marx was far more astute about the **longue duree** than we often give him credit for being. The fact is that polarization is an historically correct hypothesis, not a false one, and

one can demonstrate this empirically, provided we use as the unit of calculation the only entity which really matters for capitalism, the capitalist world-economy. Within this entity there has been over four centuries not merely a relative but even an absolute polarization of classes. And if this is the case, wherein lies the progressiveness of capitalism?

Needless to say, we have to specify what we mean by polarization. The definition is by no means self-evident. First of all, we have to distinguish between social distribution of material wealth (broadly defined) on the one hand, and the social bifurcation that is the result of the twin processes of proletarianization and bourgeoisification on the other.

As far as the distribution of wealth is concerned, there are various ways to calculate it. We have to decide initially upon the unit of calculation, not only the spatial unit (we have already indicated above our preference for the world-economy over the national state or the enterprise), but also the temporal unit. Are we talking of distribution over an hour, a week, a year, thirty years? Each calculation might give different, even incompatible, results. In point of fact, the majority of people are interested in two temporal calculations. One is that of the very short term, which might be called the survival calculation. The other might be called the lifetime calculation, used for measuring the quality of life, the social assessment of the everyday life one has actually lived.

The survival calculation is by nature variable and ephemeral. It is the lifetime calculation which offers us the best measure, objectively and subjectively, of whether or not there has been material polarization. We need to make comparisons of these lifetime calculations that are intergenerational and long-term. Intergenerational comparisons, however, do not mean here comparisons within a single lineage, because that intrudes a factor that is irrelevant from the perspective of the world-system as a whole, which is the social mobility rate in particular zones of the world-economy. Rather we

should compare parallel strata of the world-economy at successive historical moments, each stratum being measured over the lifetimes of the cohort. The question to ask is whether for a given stratum the lifetime experience at one historical moment is easier or harder than at another, and whether or not there has occurred over time an increased gap between the higher strata and the lower

The calculation should involve, not merely total lifetime revenue but also this revenue divided by total lifetime hours of work devoted to its acquisition (in whatever form) so as to get figures which could serve as the basis of comparative analysis. One must also consider the life span, but preferably one calculated from age 1 or even age 5 (in order to eliminate the effect of those improvements in sanitation which may have lowered the infant mortality rate without necessarily affecting the health of adults). Finally, one should work into the calculation (or index) the various ethnocides which, by depriving many persons of any descendants, played a role in improving the lot of certain others.

If one finally obtained some reasonable figures, calculated over the long run and across the whole world-economy, I believe these figures would demonstrate clearly that over the last 400 years there has been a significant material polarization within the capitalist world-economy. To make myself quite clear, I am suggesting that the large (still rural) majority of the population of the world-economy works harder and longer today for less reward than 400 years ago.

I have no intention of idealizing the life of the masses of earlier epochs; I merely wish to assess the overall level of their human possibilities compared with their present-day descendants. The fact that skilled workers in a Western country are better off than **their** ancestors says little about the standards of living of an unskilled worker in Calcutta today, not to speak of that of a Peruvian or Indonesian agricultural casual worker.

It may be perhaps objected that I am being too "economistic" in using as the measure of a Marxist

concept like proletarianization the balance-sheet of material revenue. After all, it is argued by some, what matters are the relations of production. No doubt this is a fair comment. Let us look, therefore, at polarization as a social bifurcation, a transformation of multiple relations into the single antinomy of bourgeois and proletarian. Let us look, that is, not only at proletarianization (a standby of the Marxist literature) but also at bourgeoisification (its logical counterpart, which is however seldom discussed in this same literature).

In this case too we must specify what we mean by these terms. If by definition a bourgeois can only be the typical industrialist of Frengland at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and a proletarian can only be the person who works in this industrialist's factory, then it is quite certain that there has not been much of a class polarization in the history of the capitalist system. One might even make a case that polarization has been reduced. However, if one means by a true bourgeois and a true proletarian all those who live off **current** revenue, that is, without depending on income from inherited sources (capital, property, privileges, etc.), the distinction being one between those (the bourgeois) who live off the surplus-value which the others (the proletarians) create, without much dual role-playing by individuals, then one can argue indeed that, over the centuries, more and more persons have come to be located unambiguously in one or the other category and that this is the consequence of a structural process which is far from completed.

It will clarify the argument to look at these processes close up. What actually happens in "proletarianization"? Workers throughout the world live in small groups of income-pooling "households". These groups, which are neither necessarily nor totally kin-related nor necessarily coresidential, rarely do without some wage-income. But they equally rarely subsist exclusively on their wage-income. They add to wage-income from petty commodity production, rents,

gifts and transfer payments, and (not least) subsistence production. Thus they pool multiple sources of income, in of course very different proportions in different places and times. We can think of proletarianization thus as the process of increasing dependence on wage-income as a percentage of the whole. It is totally ahistorical to think that a household goes suddenly from zero percent to 100% dependence on wages. More likely, given households shift, sometimes in brief periods, from say a 25% dependence to a 50% dependence. This is for example what happened more or less in that locus classicus, the English enclosures of the eighteenth century.

Who gains by proletarianization? It is far from sure that it is the capitalists. As the percentage of a household's income coming from wages increases, the level of wages must simultaneously be **increased** and not decreased in order for it to approach the **minimum** level required for reproduction. Perhaps you will think such an argument absurd. If these workers had not received the biological minimum wage preciously, how could they have survived? It is not in fact however absurd. For if the wage-income is but a small proportion of total household income, the employer of the wage-worker is able to pay a **subminimal** hourly wage, forcing the other "components" of total household income to "make up" the difference between the wage paid and the minimum needed for survival. Thus the work required to obtain supraminimal income from subsistence labor or petty commodity production in order to "average out" at a minimum level for the whole household serves in effect as a "subsidy" for the employer of the wage-laborer, a transfer to this employer of additional surplus-value. This is what explains the scandalously low wage-scales of the peripheral zones of the world-economy.

The essential contradictions of capitalism is well known. It is that between the interest of the capitalist as individual entrepreneur seeking to maximize his profits

(and hence minimize his costs of production, including wages) and his interest as a member of a class which cannot make money unless its members can realise their profits, that is, sell what they produce. Hence they need buyers, and this can often mean that they need to increase the cost revenue of workers.

(To be continued)

C. R. D. on . . .

(Continued from page 10)

issues. The country cannot afford the constant communal conflict which will result from a large influx of **ethnically motivated** colonists and settlers who come to the area with a confrontational attitude. Since the issue of land colonisation will be one of the major questions to be encompassed by any negotiated settlement of disputed ethnic issues, any ethnically motivated colonisation today imperils the possibility of such a settlement. A solution must also adopt some of the following principles if conflict is to be avoided in the future :

a) As far as possible, decentralized units should have substantial control of settlement policy.

b) A state aided settlement policy must not radically alter the ethnic composition of a particular district, especially in the light of the present conflict and strife in Trincomalee.

c) The first priority should be given to the landless within a given district. Thereafter a rational plan of settlement which will meet the real needs of the landless in other districts without exacerbating conflict should be devised. In any event, settlements motivated by a sense of ethnic confrontation must be discouraged and land should be allocated according to bona fide criteria of poverty, need, income level etc.

The creation of public opinion against nuclear war

L. N. T. Mendis

WE ARE living in a very fateful period in the history of the world when its future as the habitat for the human species is very much in doubt. The American Journalist Jonathan Schell has written a book called the 'Fate of the Earth' which has become a sensation in the United States. It has now almost become the Bible as it were of the anti-war movement in that country. This book has cited many new facts about the potential consequences of the use of nuclear weapons presently in the armouries of the main nuclear powers. The book has revealed many new facts from a document entitled the "Effects of Nuclear War" published in 1979 by the US Congressional Office of Technology Assessment.

Schell's book demonstrates that a single megaton bomb of which there are several thousands in the arsenals of the nuclear powers will have about 80 times the explosive force of the first Hiroshima bomb and will literally kill in seconds tens of millions of people. The conventional blockbuster bomb of World War II had a yield of 10 tons of TNT. The Hiroshima uranium bomb yielded 12,500 tons of TNT. Today's megaton bomb is the equivalent of 1,000,000 tons of TNT. Some warheads have a yield of 25,000,000 tons TNT equivalent (i.e. 2000 Hiroshimas)

As you may know, the atomic bomb, called 'little boy', which fell on Hiroshima killed instantly 140,000 people in 10 seconds and maimed for life another 250,000. The fire ball it created blinded for life people within a radius of 4 kilometres and victims of that disaster and their children, born after exposure to atomic radiation, are suffering even today.

The Director of the Swedish International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has given us an account of the findings of 44 scientists from 14 countries assembled by the International Peace Bureau in July 1977. The finds are indeed 'terrifying'. The uranium fission bomb dropped on Hiroshima on 6th August, 1945 had a yield equivalent to 12,500 tons of TNT while the plutonium bomb dropped on Nagasaki on 6th August, 1945 had a yield of 22,000 tons TNT equivalent. Only the effects at Hiroshima are summarised here, 35% of the bomb's total energy converted to thermal radiation with a high infra-red composition. About 50% was blast and about 15% ionising radiation. The fireball produced reached a maximum temperature of several million degrees centigrade on explosion and expanded to 280 meters in one second at which time the surface temperature was 5000° centigrade. At a distance of 4 Kilometers from the explosion, the radiation (heat and light) was 20 times more than that of the sun. At 3.5 kilometers fabric and wood were charred and skin burnt. Black rain fell. It was highly radioactive. The blast destroyed all buildings within 2 kilometers travelling with a pressure of 7 tons per square meter and a velocity of 120 miles per second. All persons who received radiation doses of 900 rads died. 140,000 immediately; in all 350,000 were directly exposed.

This account will not be complete without one more scenario. The nuclear warheads now available have charges of up to 25,000,000 tons of TNT. 2000 times more powerful than the "little boy" which fell on Hiroshima. Schell in

his book referred to earlier, concludes from his study of the congressional report that:-

"In the event of a full scale attack, fires would simply burn down the USA," Substantial sections of the country being turned by a sort of nuclear carpet bombing into immense infernal regions, literally tens of thousands of square miles in area from which escape is impossible".

In brief, the country would be a radioactive desert. The effect of the bombing would be ecocidal. The environment would be completely transformed and the United States would become a "**Republic of insects and grass**". He adds "those observers who speak of 'recovery' after such a 'holocaust' or of 'winning' a nuclear war are dreaming." Needless to say, the effects on the Soviet Union of a similar atomic onslaught would be very similar.

We are informed that the idea of a 'Republic of insects' is not really new. In July 1965 a US anti-war committee inserted a full page advertisement showing a picture of a cockroach declaring it to be the winner in World War III. The reason is that humans exposed to 600 rads of radioactivity die an agonizing death, whereas a cockroach takes anything up to 100,000 rads in its stride.

As someone said, if you eat you are involved in agriculture. Similarly, we must realise this basic truth — "**if you are alive, you have to be involved with disarmament**". Mankind is confronted with two alternatives — we must halt the arms race or face annihilation.

ation and it will be death not only for individuals but for the entire human race. There is no longer any possibility for any rational human being to dissociate himself from this enterprise for a peaceful world. Whatever our age whatever our position, whatever our religion, whatever our social and political philosophy, whether we are rich or poor whether we are black, white, yellow or brown, the concern to prevent nuclear catastrophe is a prime duty of all human beings.

While over five hundred million people are below the poverty level and live under conditions which are an affront to human dignity, the total world arms expenditure has risen from \$ 350 billion in 1976 to \$ 650 billion in 1983. **This expenditure is a staggering \$ 1.8 billion a day, \$ 75 million an hour and more than \$ 1 million a minute.** World military expenditure in + 980 was equal to the aggregate gross domestic product of all African and Latin American countries¹. Now it is equal to the income of 1,800,000 people in the thirty six poorest nations of the earth. **In two days,** the world spends on arms **"the equivalent of a year's budget for the UN and its specialised agencies."**² It has been calculated that 45 percent of the total military expenditure is by US and NATO, 33 percent by the countries of Warsaw Pact Treaty and the balance by the rest of the World. The disease of arms — is not confined to the big powers. With their meagre resources they have also equipped themselves with arms, sometimes without any clear enemy in sight! It has been calculated that, in the underdeveloped countries taken as a whole, there is one soldier for every 250 inhabitants and one medical doctor for every 3,700 people. In the world as a whole there are 550 soldiers and 85 doctors for every 100,000 inhabitants.³ A mere fraction of the resources spent on the military will make life easier for millions of people the world over.

On 7th June 1982, the Second Session of the UN General Assembly devoted to disarmament was opened by the President of the

General Assembly Ismat T. Kittani. He informed the delegates that they were gathered together "at a time of extreme tension, uneasiness and armed conflicts and mounting threat to international peace and security. "He said that he personally felt a strong sense of responsibility to project "the deep preoccupation of all the millions of people in the world who are following the deliberations of the assembly with hope, concern and fear".

— **Hope** — that meaningful steps could be taken to solve the most dangerous dilemma of our time.

— **Concern** — over the consequences for humanity if the arms race is not stopped.

— **Fear** — that we may fail.

He adds that world, civilisation — is at stake. This is not empty rhetoric! it is a fact. Mr. Kittani informed the assembly that "it is shocking to realise that since the end of world war II, some 40 percent of the world's research and development expenditure has been directed at achieving military needs." He further deplored the fact that the tendency has been clearly increasing in some circles to accept the idea of 'limited nuclear war', to speak of its inevitability and to argue that one country or another can win a nuclear war. He went on to quote his Holiness Pope John Paul II in a letter sent to him in December where he referred to a conclusion reached in a study of nuclear warfare made by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences that "it is important to ward off previously, or to limit afterwards, the disastrous effects . . . foreseen as a certain result of the use of such weapons." The Pope had added **"the last great epidemic of our civilisation can be prevented only by putting an end to the arms race."** Mr. Kittani said that despite this gloomy picture there was some hope — First — "the economic factors related to the arms race are working in favour of rationality and moderation. Secondly, most encouragingly — there is a **growing and increasingly organised and assertive public movement against the ARMS RACE.** "This ground-



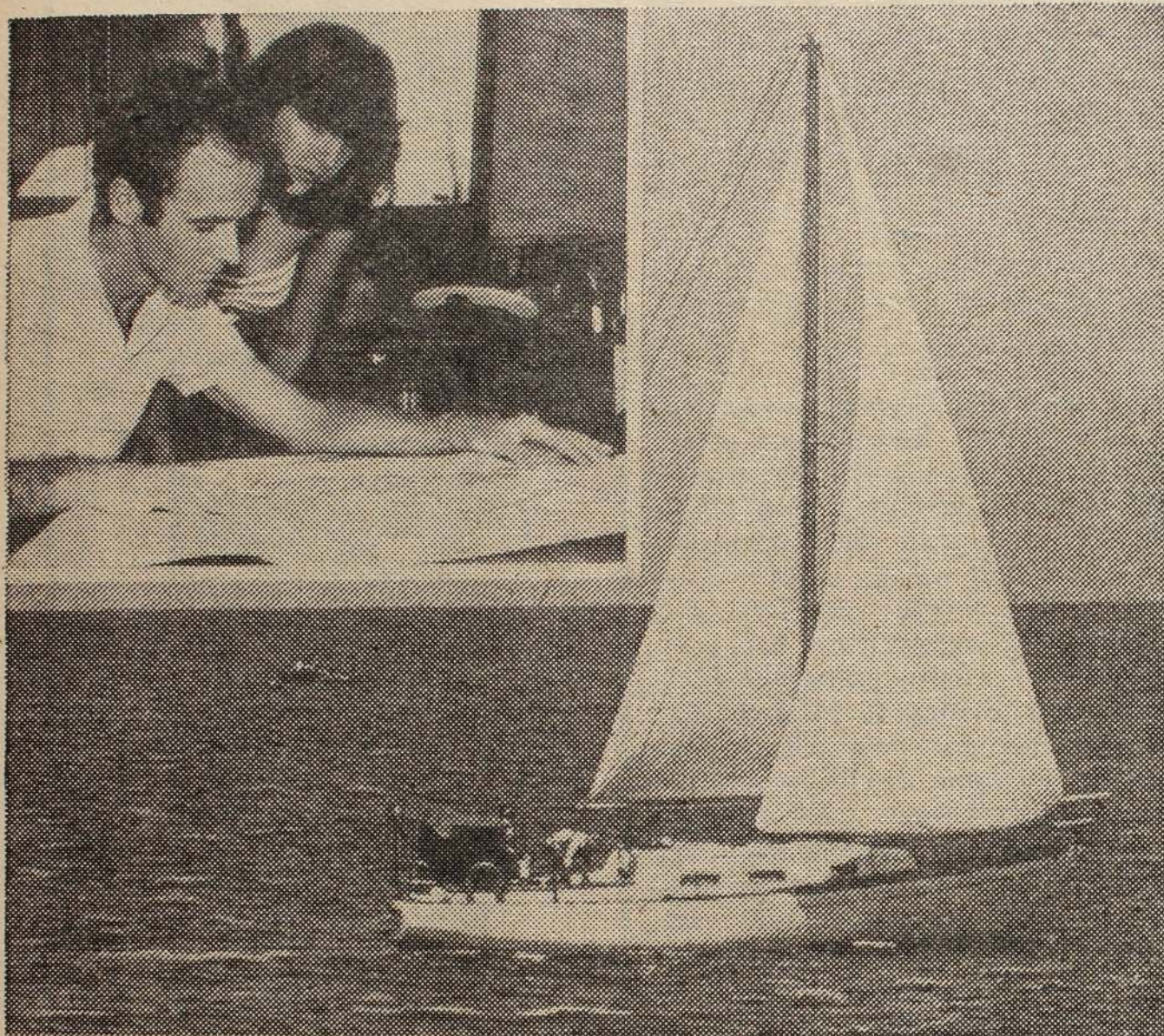
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swell of public opinion is world-wide and cuts across the entire political spectrum. It is to me particularly significant that in many countries religious leaders are in the forefront of this movement" said Mr. Kittani.⁴

Following the President, the Secretary General of the UN stated that this special session of the General Assembly was taking place at a time "when war is raging in several corners of the world." The Secretary-General stated that "the arms race which had already reached such dangerous and irrational proportions four years ago — has continued to spread and intensify." Weapons of **terrifying destructiveness** are being piled up at an increasing tempo. The neutron bomb is the latest. He added that "it is ironic that the accumulation of arms is one of the few expanding industries in a period of economic depression and gloom. Apocalypse today is not merely a biblical prediction. It has become a very real possibility."

The mounting public interest which the President of the Assembly refers to was demonstrated in no uncertain terms five days after the Assembly Session began in New York. On June 12th a 'Day of Peace' was declared in New York to being the opinion of the American and world public to the delegates at the Special Assembly. Just as much as the Nuclear capacity for destruction can now be described as a Mega Hiroshima, the New York Daily News called this rally for peace "A Megaton of Humanity on parade." The march was estimated at between 800,000 and one million participants — the biggest political demonstration in the entire history of New York city. That Saturday, Central Park which very often witnesses the enactment of sordid episodes in broad daylight, witnessed a huge concourse of people both from the US and elsewhere; even 40 'Hibakushis' — survivors of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki marched. Blacks and whites, Americans, workers and businessmen, socialists and Christians stood shoulder to shoulder demonstrating their power for peace. Even Dr. Benjamin Spock the world famous 'baby' Doctor, was there to speak

for the world's babies. There were some amusing slogans also carried in placards — for instance, a line from Hamlet's soliloquy 'To be or not to be that is the question' and another "arms are for embracing, not for firing". The president of New York City Council, Carol Bellamy addressing the marchers said — "look around you for just one moment, my friends, at the beauty of New York's urban landscape. Then consider that the detonation of a single one megaton bomb would flatten every building in site. The flash of white light, the force of the fireball, would within seconds char batter and crush every living being within a 9 mile radius."

In another speech Brooklyn's District Attorney warned "if you do not listen to us now, we will be five million people next time, and 50 million the next time and 500 million after that. We won't stop until we win, because we are for the forces of life." In the course of his address at SSOD II, the UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar pointed out that the **"one single submarine carrying nuclear warheads is estimated to have more explosive power than that of all the bombs and shells used during the entire period of the Second World War"** He added "in fact each one of us . . . each one on the face of this earth has a statistical share of three tons of high explosive." (In point of fact, 10 pounds of high explosive can shatter a human being to unrecognizable pieces). He added that, as if that was not enough, "500,000 scientists all over the world are devoting their knowledge to the search for weaponry more sophisticated and more deadly." He characterised this as "a perversion of ingenuity and an offence against the dignity of man", and also 'paving the way to the point of no return.'

In a message to the Session, the Soviet delegate stated that the decision "to undertake the obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons" solemnly proclaimed by the supreme Soviet of the USSR, became effective immediately it was announced from the rostrum of the UN. He further said it

is a unilateral obligation and not depending on the position of other nuclear states on the question. He added that the Soviet Union, in addition to declaring the no-first use of nuclear weapons, was prepared to reach agreement on a world treaty on the non-use of force, in general, and that, "according to a statement by Edwin Meese Principal Advisor to the President of the US, the nuclear program announced by Washington . . . is aimed at reasserting the strategic superiority of the United States over the Soviet Union within ten years".⁵

At the Special Session two well known personalities Johan Galtung a Professor at Geneva University and an authority in peace studies had characterised the no-first-use declaration as "so far the only event of importance at the Session." The Professor of International Law at Princeton University, Richard Falk had commented that the Soviet Union's commitment was "a real substantive contribution to the reduction of the danger of nuclear war." Professor Galtung further stated that if the United States accepted the Soviet Union's proposal, the world peace movement will applaud Regan. "If he does not . . . the world will see even more clearly the sources of the common threat to peace and the pressure of the peace forces on the US will increase."

Incidentally, the prestigious Foreign Affairs magazine brought out in its spring 1982 issue an unexpected article written by four well known authorities on defence. They are Robert S. McNamara former Defence Secretary, George Kennan a distinguished US Ambassador along with Gerard Smith a high ranking diplomat and McGeorge Bundy former advisor to two US presidents. They all recommended that "the possibility of the US assuming an obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons should be given most thorough consideration."⁶ Objections were voiced by the US administration to the article, with the result that it got broader publicity. The press called these 4 authors the "Gang of Four". Fol-

lowing up his contribution, to this article, McGeorge Bundy in the June 1982 issue of the 'Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists' made the point that "ability to understand the current military-strategic balance — roughly one of parity — was obscured by habits of mind . . . established decades ago, when it seemed that the US had and could keep some useable nuclear advantage."

In this address to the General Assembly on 17th June President Regan stated that . . . "the Soviet Union had forged ahead in both the nuclear and conventional fields. Accordingly, the United States had embarked on an effort to renew its strength which has fallen dangerously low."

(To be continued)

1. UN statistics.
2. World Military and Social Expenditure by Ruth Leger Sivard quoted by Disarmament and World Development Ed. Jolly — Pergamon Press, New York & London.
3. Year book Swedish International Peace Research Institute — (SIPRI) 1982 p 22, p. 9.
4. Disarmament—Report of Second Special Session for Disarmament Vol. V., No. 2 — November, 1982 — UN Centre for Disarmament. pp 3-7.
5. At Los Angeles on August 18th. 1981.
6. Bundy McGeorge, Kennan, G. McNamara, R et al, Nuclear Weapons and the Atlantic Alliance, Foreign Affairs, Vol. 60, No. 4, Spring 1982 pp. 753-768.

Where have . . .

(Continued from page 5)

important observation of Mr. Justice Sharvananda merits repetition. It is a lesson for all politicians and wielders of power:

"It is an interesting phenomenon that political parties in opposition often turn out to be champions of judicial independence, but when in power they have reservations about it. A government while in office which eroded judicial independence cannot reasonably expect an independent judiciary when it is out of office".

WHAT IS ART?

M. Ponnambalam

MR. REGGIE SRIWARDENA'S Analysis of meaning of Art and literature (L. G. OCT. 15) shatters the lofty position so far enjoyed by Art and literature and brings them down to a state where neither Art nor literature is found superior to any other human endeavour. Mr. Sriwardena concludes his article saying "Stop talking about Art and non-art as mutually exclusive categories and instead speak of modes of communication between which we can establish relations and distinctions of various kinds...."

While this conclusion of Reggie has a remote affinity to Marx's view of a future society, it comes closer to the view of the ancient Rishis or seers who performed every work as Art and looked at everything as Art and for them the difference between Art and Non-Art did not exist at all and for them, as Reggie has pointed out in his Article (L. G. OCT. 15) not only Art and literature but all human endeavour act as a medium of communication.

But a question comes to our mind immediately with what do they communicate?

Though both views look similar in their method of approach to Art, they stand apart and betray their differences when they try to answer this question. Yes, with what do they communicate?

The Marxist view of Reggie says that the "division of Art and Non-Art is the product not only of specific social practices but also of practices originating in specific ideology." Hence according to this theory all human work and effort try to communicate with the social and ideological practices that exist in their time.

Though this view looks correct in certain ways it remains silent to the most important questions raised by Reggie himself in his article.

Can minority Art and Popular Art be judged as equal?

Can we say the minority Art is equally useless as popular Art just because it sometimes becomes the vehicle for retrogressive ideas?

Why do the people who thrill to channel 2 of the SLBC or T.V soap opera behave humanly whereas some people of the superior aesthetic cultivation do not behave so?

Why should there be a division of Art and Non-Art? Serious literature and popular literature?

Reggie's theory of mode of communication remains silent to these basic questions.

Now let us see whether the other view of the ancient seers will be able to answer these questions.

The view of the ancient Rishis says that all human actions and thought try to communicate with the blissful nature of human beings within. As man is a pleasure seeking being all his efforts are centred on communicating or getting in touch with it. But unfortunately all our efforts do not take us to that plane. Here we see the key to the division of Art and Non-Art. Anything that brings us in touch with the plane of happiness within is taken as Art and others which fall short of reaching it are relegated as non-Art and they are named after the plane to which they are able to reach.

In the ancient times it was religion that acted as the medium for one to achieve this goal. The various religious practices propounded by religious teachers taught them to realise this blissful nature or (cosmic) consciousness of man. The three Yogas such as Ghana Yoga, Bakthi Yoga and Karma Yoga of Hinduism remain as good example to this. The Karma yoga

CORRESPONDENCE

taught how to make use of one's day to day work as a medium to contact this plane of happiness. The Bakthi yoga taught how to achieve the same through proper channelling of one's emotions in art, music and literature of devotional type. The Ghana yoga taught how to aim at this goal through his intellectual self inquiry. Even during these days Art and literature remained as subservient to religion to explain the religious teaching to the laymen who did not have the capacity to grasp the highest truth. (Mahabharatha and Ramayana are good examples for this)

But with the emergence of the modern era when the four religions have become corrupt, commercialised and institutionalised they have started to lose their grounds gradually. As a result religion was superseded by Art and literature and as Julian Huxley has pointed out that Art and literature have become the substitute for religion now. The religion which remained as the vehicle or man to communicate with his highest blissful nature, was taken over by Art and literature.

Now at this juncture I can hear some people say: what the devil is this blissful nature? Is it not an illusion?

Our answer is this:

Whether man evolved from matter or spirit is immaterial. What matters is that all human beings seek for happiness. All our ideologies and deeds try to give a permanent happiness to man. Even communism which strives for equal distribution of wealth aims at bringing down this happiness to man by changing his self. The change of self coincides with this happiness. This shows that the evolution of man is based on this happiness. Hence if we accept evolution we would have to say that the element that gives happiness to man is already involved in it. In other words evolution must always go with involution. Hence

the happiness that man seeks for is not an alien thing but part and parcel of his (innermost) nature. It is to revive or regain this true nature of him, he tries various means and methods. i. e. through various deeds and thoughts he tries to communicate with this nature of him. (Art and literature play a prominent role in it; and in the realm of art, music act as the most suitable vehicle or the most sensitive medium to these waves of happiness in man. It is because of this the psychologists say that music plays the most prominent part in the life of a scientist and thinkers of the world today.)

A Yogi, the ancient seers say, who has come in touch with this plane of happiness does everything as art and sees everything as the expression of his (bliss) self within. (This, according to Marx, is only possible when man has overcome his alienation: But this part of philosophy is not relevant now for the present issue at hand.)

II

Now with these points in our mind let us see the questions raised in Reggie's article :

First let us take the division of Art and Non Art. Why Art is given a superior position over other human activities? Because, as I have pointed out earlier, it remains subservient to religion and subtle human thoughts and feelings become easily communicable through Art. Suppose a Kandyan spoon of the 18th century has the capacity to make one feel at least an atom of his inner depth, it immediately becomes art and ceases to be a kitchen utensil.

Secondly let us see why do some people who have a superior aesthetic cultivation behave inhumanly? This can be answered by raising a counter question : why do some people who have been figured as humanitarians and good social workers behave like tyrants at home? Because they departmentalise their activities. The person who has developed his faculty to understand higher philosophy may be a bad example in his social outlook. It is because of this people who behave courageously and humanly thrill to channel 2 of the S.L.B.C.

and T. V. soap opera. Though these people are courageous and humane, it has not dawned on to them to cultivate higher aesthetic values and strengthen their humane qualities in a proper outlook. Here we see the key to those religious blunders. The religious teachers who speak of oneness of all human beings do not allow their teaching to descend to the mundane life. To their mundane activities they have different theories to apply and this is entirely contradictory to what they speak and teach in their spiritual spheres. This is just like our high caste Marxist Tamil writers (Progressive writers) who speak and write against caste discrimination are heart of heart caste minded and behave differently when it comes to their personal matters. (I can cite several examples.)

Here what we see is all human beings have the tendency to departmentalise their life due to various reasons. As we live in division of labour, we divide our faculties and talents. We separate the intellectual from the emotional and the imaginative from the active and so on — The insight that we get from one source is not allowed to shed its light to the other parts of our life. Hence our immediate need is to integrate the whole life. We are in need of a new integral outlook or philosophy. This would not allow the old division or departmentalisation in one's life. But how is it to be implemented?

III

In this context, I think, it would be much suitable to mention a Tamil writer — Late Mr. M. Thalayasingam — who has not only thought of these problems but has also contributed a lot to it with a view to initiating a new philosophical-integral philosophy — outlook.

Mr. Thalayasingam's approach to Art and Literature is very interesting. He divides the history into three periods: the first is the PRE-Renaissance period. The second is the Renaissance period and the third is our present age. According to this division, he takes Marxism not as a revolutionary thought but as a continuation of the Rational thought or the fag end of the Rational thought which

had started during the period of Renaissance. It is because of this, the Marxist writers, even after the socialist Revolution in their countries, still hang on to the literary forms which were initiated during the feudal Renaissance period. If it had radically been a new or revolutionary thought it would have found new literary forms to cater to its changed needs.

The Pre-Renaissance period was the age of God faith and imagination. The ideas of that age found vehicle in the literary forms such as epics and poetry written in verse. Though the ideas of this age had their footing on earth it expanded to embrace the whole universe.

But with the emergence of the Renaissance period, God-faith, super-natural beliefs and imagination began to lose ground and reason began to take the upper hand. On the otherhand the ideas of this age, unlike in the Pre-Renaissance period, mainly confined themselves to the earth and its surroundings. Reasons and Realism was its trade mark. These ideas found expression in new literary forms such as short stories, novels, essays written in prose. It is through these feudal literary forms our socialist revolutionary writers still express their changed needs!

Now Mr. Thalayasingam comes to the present age. This, he says quoting Julian Huxley, is on the thresh-hold of giving birth to a new Revolution which is not only going to add new dimension to the mind (psychometabolism) but also going to supersede all our beliefs and system of thought which have been so previously possessed by us.

To elucidate this fact he uses the theory of evolution and says that from matter evolved life and from life evolved mind and from mind there is something new to come opening new frontiers to our mental plane. Mr. Thalayasingam further goes on saying that the discontentment that prevails among the younger generation both in capitalist and socialist countries and their methods and ways of protest against the existing society and its institutions are symbolic of this

coming revolution. When Mayakovsky said that "the 'I' of mine looks too little to me" he was echoing the same change without being fully aware of it.

Hence, Mr. Thalayasingham says that all our activities must be directed to communicate with this dawning inner light or consciousness which is the source of our happiness. While we communicate with it we must also be strong enough to bring it down to earth and broaden our life on earth.

As this happiness or consciousness being the true nature of all human beings, if fights against all divisions narrowness and selfishness. Hence he says, all human endeavour performed in any form to combat this selfishness feeds on narrow retrogressive socio-economic and ideological set up must be taken as Art.

Mr. Thalayasingham concludes his theory saying that writers and thinkers are the first people who are sensitive and receptive to these changes and they must pave the way to this new Revolution by creating a climate by their writings. These writings must not conform themselves to the old literary forms (such as short stories, novels, poems, and essays) which are associated with the sickness of divisions and narrowness of the old dying society. As a result they would not have any grip on the people to change their old mental outlook. Hence, Thalayasingham says a new form must be evolved and this he calls MEIYUL. i.e. MEI-REALISM or TRUTH-REALISM. This meiyul, he says would not allow the old dichotomy of private and public life in any person who comes to do anything to the people. What he preaches must be practised and what he writes must be lived. To contain this new philosophy and truth we must have a new form. This form can be either the mixture of old forms or an entirely new one; but it would be inclined on destroying the old forms and the old way of life. Hence Mr. Thalayasingham says that this new Art has come to destroy art and this new literature has come to destroy literature. This destruction would eventually lead to see every work as Art.

Letter

CRD and Lotus Eater

I have read the CRD reply to Lotus Eater (Guardian — 1/12/83 P. 8)

Kandyan/Low Country Sinhalese

Whatever the reasons you have quite deliberately split the Sinhalese into two groups — Kandyan and Low Country. At the same time you have failed to split the Tamils into Indian or Colombo or Jaffna, Batticaloa and Trincomalee.

Sinhalese buying land in Jaffna and adjacent areas

Population figures are irrelevant. The facts can easily be obtained from the Land Registries in these districts. Is it deliberate this decision not to obtain these figures from the same sources you have obtained all other figures? The Colombo district cannot be discussed separately. Its figures will reveal the grip over it by the non-Sinhalese.

Teaching Tamil in schools

I maintain that Tamil should be taught as a subject to Tamil children all over the country. However the price of integration is the introduction of Sinhala as the medium of instruction. In a few British schools there is only a suggestion that Hindi and Urdu be taught to children to whom this is a home language. It has never been suggested that British children be taught Urdu or Hindi compulsorily or even as a matter of choice. Indian labour in Sri Lanka is as alien to this country as Indian and Pakistan immigrants are in Britain. The children of all immigrants to Britain learn English and over two decades get absorbed into the British stream of life. The problem that remains for some of them is mainly one of colour. In Sri Lanka a deliberate decision of a colonial power has kept our two races Sinhala and Indians apart. It is only when Sinhala is the medium

of instruction in every school throughout the Central Province that the Indians will integrate with the Sinhalese. Otherwise you are laying the base of what will be a major ethnic war in this country. One point five million (1.5) Indians talking Tamil live in isolation in the heart of Sinhala. What is your solution for their integration? What if 60 million Sinhalese lived in one geographical area — say Madhya Pradesh in India — talking only Sinhala?

Government statistics and the Private Sector

Why are you confining your statistics to figures taken from Government Departments? What about the private sector? For instance what are the employment figures in (1) Banks (2) Commercial Companies (3) Patterns of voting in (a) Rotary (b) Lions (c) Medical/Law/Accountants Association elections (4) an analysis of the telephone directory and Fergusons Directory to show how the Sinhalese are being reduced to a helpless minority in the world of commerce (5) Foreign Organizations (a) Sinhala persons in U. N. Agencies (b) a study of the intake at the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok especially from 1970 to 1980.

In the end it is the Sinhala peasant and the new civilization he will build on the banks of the Mahaweli that will determine the future of Sri Lanka.

Sinhaputhra

Colombo

Communal . . .

(Continued from page 8)

logies, religions, castes and social classes. We are also burdened by the political, economic and social trends causing hardships to many and tensions among us.

(To be continued)



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